

SE Regional Diamondback Terrapin Workshop
Feb 27, 2008
Charleston, SC

Notes from NC break-out group

1. We do not have historical/current population data
 - a. determine range and density through research
 - b. identify levels of fishing effort (crab pots). This could shift with season because of peeler pots in spring, etc.
2. There is a need for education of the people involved in recreational crab fishery
 - a. NC aquariums and realtors of summer cottages are a good resource for distributing information to the public
3. Need for equipment and gear adaptations for recreational crab pots
 - a. terrapin excluders
 - b. bio-degradable panels
 - c. educational material provided with traps when sold
 - d. be good to require this on commercially made traps marketed to recreational crabbers
4. Identify and manage key nesting sites for population enhancement.
 - a. manage nest predators, manage (protect) nest
 - b. potential for head-start effectiveness research (volunteers, students, interns)
5. Collaborate data sharing
6. Monitor what is impacting nests? (fire ants, foxes, raccoons for sure, feral dogs, ghost crabs) use students, interns, volunteers.
7. Formation of a cooperative instate group to develop and implement action plan for education, research, monitoring and conservation efforts (we can build on what has been already done in other states; and one participant from another group urged everyone to start pro active conservation in areas where the issues and solutions are already documented.) The membership of this group would be a composite of academic biologists and students, and various organizations and agencies. A partial list was started (as follows-- but we ran out of time): NC Aquariums, Wildlife Resources, State Marine Fisheries, NC Audubon, Tortoise Reserve, State Parks, National Parks and Seashores, PARC, NOAA, USFWS. This group would not be under the direction of any one agency or organization.

Two additional and important thoughts that were brought up but not worked into our notes:

1. NC Fisheries has not acted on terrapin by-catch issues because there have been no concerns expressed by the public. There is strong evidence that this is a major mortality factor in NC. So it seems logical that part of our program should be public awareness. Restructure of crabbing regulations in 2009 might be a good opportunity to at least suggest changes in recreational crabbing regulations.

2. Several of us talked briefly after the meeting and discussed the idea of a terrapin informational archive for NC. (Item 5 above) Its purpose would be to make historical and current information available to everyone in our group. There is a lot of unpublished information out there and this could be a valuable resource both for us and for agencies. I would suggest that we have two versions maintained at two different locations. A hard copy version and an electronic one. The latter would make access efficient and the former would be a back-up for when the inevitable happens.